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THE NAVAHO

By FRANCES E. WATKINS

NAVAHO WOMAN IN FULL NATIVE COSTUME OF ABOUT 1890.
(Photo by Ben Wittick; courtesy of Laboratory
of Anthropology, Santa Fe)

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THE NAVAHO

By Frances E. Watkins

Homeland—The ancient homeland of the Navaho Indians, created according to legend by the tribal gods, was bounded on the north by Ute Mountain in southwestern Colorado, on the east by Pelada, a peak in the Jemez mountains of northern New Mexico, on the west by the San Francisco peaks in northern Arizona, and on the south by Mount Taylor, which rises above Laguna pueblo in New Mexico. All of these mountains are regarded as sacred. In early historic times the Navaho lived in the northeastern portion of their present range, with a stronghold in Cañon de Chelly in western Arizona. Today they occupy an extensive reservation situated chiefly in northeastern Arizona, but covering a large area in northwestern New Mexico and extending into southern Utah. This vast territory, comprising some 16,621,248 acres, includes largely mountain and desert terrain, together with some small but fertile valleys.

Language—The Navaho, like their relatives, the Apache, are members of the widespread Athapascan linguistic family. The Athapascan language in modified form is in general use over the entire Navaho reservation, although many individuals speak Spanish, and an increasing number understand English, especially those educated in Government and mission schools. The Navaho speech, however, is in no danger of extinction.

The Navaho call themselves *Díné,* a form of the Athapascan *tinné,* meaning simply "people" or "the people." The word *Navaho* is of Tewa origin, meaning "great planted fields," and comes from the name of an ancient Tewa village on the Pajarito Plateau in New Mexico, which was surrounded by extensive cornfields.

History—The Navaho may be regarded as comparative newcomers into the territory which is now considered peculiarly their own. According to native legend and tradition, supported to a certain extent by archeological and linguistic studies, the people now known as the Navaho and Apache entered the Southwest some time about 1200 to 1400 A. D., following the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains from the far north. They had not, apparently, penetrated deeply into Arizona or New Mexico by 1540, for chroniclers who accompanied Spanish expeditions in that year failed to mention them. The first known historical reference to the Na-

vaho occurs in the *Relaciones* of Father Gerónimo Zárate Salmerón, who wrote an account of the activities in California and New Mexico between 1538 and 1626, in which he speaks

FIG. 1—Portion of map by Don Bernardo de Miera y Pacheco resulting from the Domínguez and Escalante expedition in New Mexico in 1776, showing the Navaho country at that time. (Drawn by Evelyn Nadeau from a photostat copy of the original.)

of "that nation of Apache Indians of Navahu." Fray Alonso de Benavides mentions them in his *Memorial* on New Mexico, published in 1630, as being very great farmers.

Acording to native legend the Navaho and Apache separated about four hundred years ago, the former taking refuge in Cañon de Chelly, from which haven they made frequent successful forays on their more peaceful neighbors,

FIG. 2—Navaho cornfield; summer and winter hogháns in background. (A. C. Vroman, photo.; P. G. Gates collection, Southwest Museum.)

and where they were joined by clans from Acoma and Zuñi. In historic times they were the bane of the more industrious and peaceable Southwestern tribes and Spanish colonists, until the end of the Mexican war in 1848 brought American settlers into the country. After a long period of frontier warfare the Navaho submitted to Kit Carson in 1863, when the destruction of their flocks and fields brought them to the point of starvation. After a brief tragic interlude at Fort Sumner, New Mexico, in what was known as Bosque Redondo, they were returned to a reservation comprising a large part of their ancient domain, in 1867, their numbers reduced to fewer than 10,000. Since then they have increased in population until, in the last census, they numbered about 50,000. Unlike most American Indian tribes, the Navaho have increased in numbers and prosperity under Federal administration, possibly because of their genius for adaptability.

SUBSISTENCE—The history of the Navaho Indians must be taken into account in the study of their foods. During their early roving life they were hunters and gatherers of wild foods, although they probably learned the secret of cultivated crops soon after their arrival in the Southwest. Being primarily hunters, the men killed deer, mountain sheep, mountain goats, and buffalo, with bow and arrow, while they trapped practically all the smaller edible creatures of the region. Women gathered seeds, nuts, and edible plants which

they prepared by pulverizing on a metate and preserved by drying. Fish, formerly abundant in the mountain streams, have always been tabooed as an article of Navaho diet.

Agriculture gradually supplemented wild foods more and more, although these continued in use. The Navaho grew their crops as the Hopi do, by deep planting in sandy arroyos and fertile cañons, using the wooden digging and planting stick characteristic of the Southwest from early times. They raised the same foods as their Pueblo neighbors—corn, two or more varieties of beans, and squash. The corn was ground on the metate and prepared for eating in many different ways, some of which have survived in the dishes served during certain ceremonies.

After the Spaniards brought domestic animals into the area, the meat of wild game was largely replaced by mutton and beef, hence the products of the chase, although enjoyed as much as ever, became luxuries. Women continued to gather piñon nuts and other wild foods, but added herding of flocks of sheep and goats to their other duties. Thus it was that,

FIG. 3—Navaho woman cooking corn pudding in an underground oven. (A. C. Vroman photo.; P. G. Gates Collection, Southwest Museum.)

FIG. 4—Navaho shepherd boy with his flock near Ganado, Arizona. (Photo by Dr. J. A. Munk.)

by destroying the flocks upon which the Navaho had come to depend, the Americans were finally enabled to bring them to terms.

It was probably during the period spent at Bosque Redondo that modern foodstuffs came into use. Today Indian traders supply the Navaho with prepared cornmeal and wheat flour for his bread; native herb teas, once popular, have been replaced by coffee and tea, and even goat's milk. Mutton, the principal meat, is roasted or prepared as a stew. Wheat, potatoes, and melons have been added to corn, beans, and squash in the garden patches. Canned foods and sweets from the traders' shelves are considered indispensable luxuries.

The old underground oven and earthenware cooking-pots have been replaced by metal kettles, frying pans, and coffee-pots. Except in stormy weather, meals are cooked and eaten out of doors.

SHELTER—The characteristic Navaho dwelling, known as the hoghán, is a substantial house of brush and pole construction, usually covered with earth for greater warmth and comfort. Hogháns are of two forms, both of which are still constructed. The conical hoghán consists of a frame-

work of poles leaned at an angle of about forty-five degrees against a supporting frame, covered with smaller poles and brush, sometimes with an added layer of juniper-bark, and the whole then covered with earth. A doorway, usually built with a sort of narrow entry to keep out the blasts of winter, is closed with a blanket, and the chimney is no more than a hole in the peak of the roof. The dome-shape hoghán is six-sided, constructed with poles laid horizontally, each course narrower than the last, until the dome is closed over. The usual covering of smaller poles, brush, and earth completes the structure. The smoke-hole is at the apex of the roof, and the door resembles that of the conical building. In both types the floor is excavated to a depth of a foot and a half or two feet, for added warmth, with the firepit in the center. These are snug, sturdy dwellings, well-suited to the climate. Sometimes logs are replaced by flat stones and adobe. At present rectangular stone houses are making their appearance in the Navaho country. Roofless brush shelters, to afford shade and protection from the wind, are usually erected near the hoghán, and it is here that the family carry on their work.

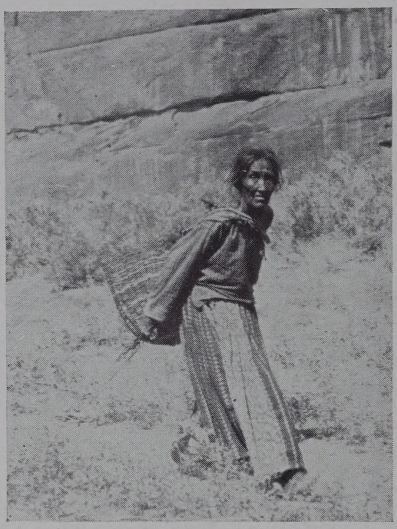

FIG. 5—Navaho woman carrying peaches in old-style wicker burden basket, Cañon de Chelly, Arizona. (Photo. by Dr. J. A. Munk.)

The summer hoghán is of brush, so constructed as to keep off the prevailing winds, open to leeward, and often open at one end.

Medicine lodges, erected for healing ceremonies, usually resemble the conical hoghán, but on a much larger scale. The sweat-house is like a small hoghán, minus the smoke-hole. Stones are heated outside and carried in by means of wooden tongs. When the sweat-house is intended for ceremonial use, special materials are required for each ceremony.

The dwelling house is dedicated with a ceremony which amounts to a ritual, replete with symbolism and poetry.

The ancient type of dwelling was far less elaborate than that of recent times. It consisted merely of a dugout, covered with a rude mat made of grass and yucca leaves, sewed with

FIG. 6—Three little shepherdesses in Monument Valley, Arizona. (Photo. by Mrs. F. W. Hodge.)

yucca cords, and was entered by means of a ladder, probably a notched pole. When it came time to move, the roof was rolled up and carried by means of a handle, while the ladder was also taken to the next stopping place.

COSTUME—Navaho dress, picturesque and characteristic as

it is today, has undergone a number of changes. According to tradition the Navaho of the earlier period wore clothing woven of yucca and grass fibers. Yucca leaves were boiled, pounded with a stone, then twisted and braided with mountain grass into shoes (or sandals) and blankets, the latter sometimes braided with rabbit-fur and provided with loops to draw it close to the body for warmth. Later, clothing was made from dressed deerskins obtained from the Ute.

After the introduction of weaving in the early part of the 18th century, Navaho garb underwent a sharp change. Woolen blankets, woven on the vertical Pueblo loom, were fashioned into shirts, dresses, and shawls. Cotton cloth was probably originally obtained from the Hopi, who were noted weavers of cotton. The woman's dress of this period, an adaptation of that of the Pueblos, consisted of two identical blankets, sewed up the sides, leaving openings for armholes near the top. Slits were left at the bottom of the skirt to allow greater freedom of movement. The dress was belted at the waist with a woven sash, or a leather belt ornamented with silver disks, although the latter was ordinarily made and worn by the men. A shoulder blanket of special shape and pattern was worn, and ankle-length moccasins of deerskin with ocher-dyed uppers and rawhide soles. For journeys or festive occasions the moccasins had long uppers and legging wraps which were wound in regular folds from ankle to knee. Men wore a shirt with sleeves woven separately and sewed in place, loose cotton trousers slit to the knee, and ankle-high deerskin moccasins with leg wraps. Men's blankets were of the style known today as "chiefs' blankets."

The women's woven dress gradually disappeared after the Bosque Redondo episode, to be replaced by voluminous skirts and high-necked long-sleeved blouses of bright cotton materials obtained from traders. This costume is a characteristically Navaho combination of Victorian and Spanish styles of the 19th century. Velveteen blouses in rich colors have become increasingly popular with both men and women, and those of the latter are nowadays decorated with silver buttons or coins in a row along each sleeve. Although men sometimes wear the loose cotton trousers of earlier days, they usually buy their nether garments from the trader. Navaho women have enthusiastically accepted the sewing machine and usually make their own clothing and that of the men, except for trousers and overalls. Moccasins worn today are of

ankle length, with deerskin uppers dyed dull reddish brown and with rawhide soles, and fastened with one or more silver buttons. Women's shawls are now of commercial weave, purchased from the ever-present trading post.

Both men and women wear the hair long, brushed smooth and gathered into an hour-glass shape knot at the back of the neck. Hair is usually shampooed once or twice a week with the macerated root of the soapweed yucca, better known by its Spanish name of *amole*. Men wear head-bands or tall, broad-brimmed felt hats, while women go bareheaded or wear shawls.

FIG. 7—Navaho dome-shape hoghán. (Photo by Dr. J. A. Munk.)

All, even small children, who are miniature replicas of their parents, wear necklaces of silver, shell, and turquoise beads, with silver bracelets and rings set with turquoise. Although women wear earrings, these are usually restricted to the men, who prefer a slender silver hoop, ornamented with one or two silver beads. Medicine-men wear a single earring of clear blue turquoise. The leather belt ornamented with silver disks is usually reserved for special occasions.

APPEARANCE—Owing to adoption and intermarriage with surrounding tribes, any true Navaho physical type disappeared

long since. Characteristics of any neighboring group may be observed, but there is an indefinable something about the Navaho which prevents their being mistaken for members of any other tribe. For the rest, they have long, straight black

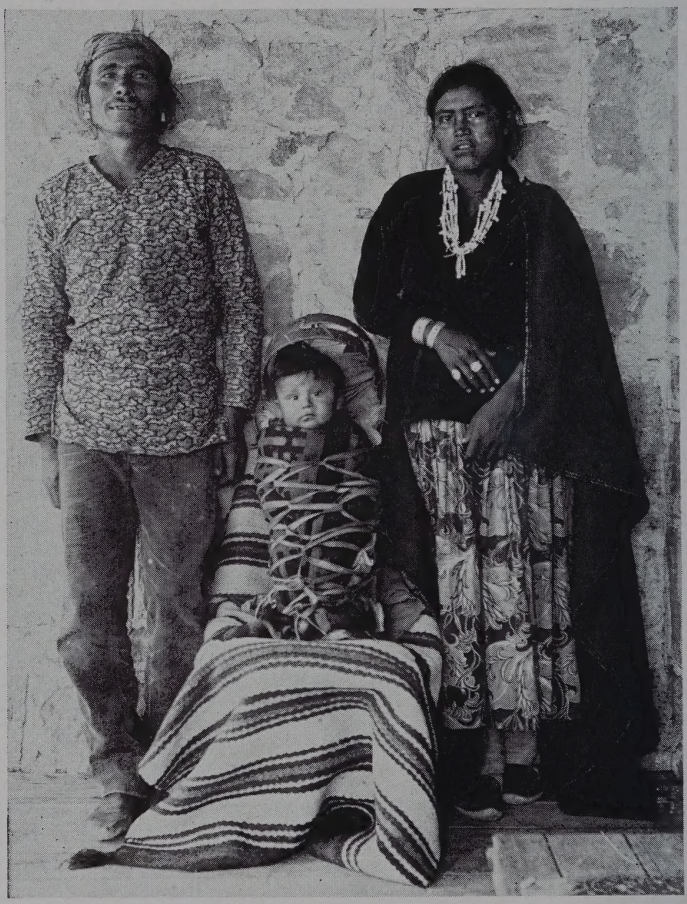

FIG. 8—Navaho family with 19th century costumes.
(A. C. Vroman photo.; P. G. Gates Collection, Southwest Museum.)

hair, sparkling black eyes, and the reddish brown skin of the native American, darkened by exposure to the Southwestern sun.

TRANSPORTATION—Methods of transport employed by the Navaho before they acquired horses were apparently so completely superseded by those of the white man as to have been almost forgotten. In ancient times the Navaho made use of a carrying basket woven without handles, supported by means of a pack-strap fastened to the staves of the basket and passed over the forehead or across the top of the head of the bearer, who was, presumably, a woman. The loaded basket was supported against the back. At present such baskets are used for gathering yucca fruit for syrup making. A wicker carrying basket, resembling that of the Hopi, has continued in use, supported by means of the woven pack-strap across the shoulders and chest. For emergency use a carrier, consisting of a frame attached to a hoop and covered with skin, might be constructed in the field. For carrying water from the spring or pool to the hoghán, Navaho women made a coiled basket water-bottle of a gallon or two-gallon capacity, waterproofed with piñon gum, supported by means of a pack-strap or cord attached to horsehair loop handles. The cradle, still in use, consists of a single board, deeply notched at the top, or two boards fastened together lengthwise, with a hood made of two (sometimes one) flat, flexible wooden bows. The carrying band passes across the crown of the mother's head.

Pack horses and burros soon replaced foot transport among the Navaho, and at the present time the family possessions are loaded into a wagon drawn by horses or mules, or into the family automobile, for the annual move from permanent winter quarters to the summer sheep range. Members of the family find places in wagon or car, or ride rangy little ponies, nearly all of which bear some trace of Arab ancestry, for their ancestors were taken to the Southwest by Spaniards in the 16th century.

CRAFTS

It is an odd fact that the ancient arts of the Navaho have almost entirely given place to crafts adopted after the coming of the white man into the Southwest. Weaving appeared only after Spanish colonists had introduced sheep to a native population which had hitherto known no domestic animals save the dog and the turkey, although the Navaho had for long been in contact with such capable weavers as the Papago, Pima, and, above all, the Pueblos. The manufacture of silver jewelry followed the cession of Mexican territory north of the

Gila river to the United States by the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848. It was not until Mexican smiths instructed the Navaho that they began to work iron and silver, although smiths were noted among the Zuñi early in the nineteenth century.

BASKETRY—The manufacture of baskets, an ancient craft of Navaho women, declined after the introduction of weaving. Of late years the greater number of baskets used in Navaho ritual have been received by trade with other tribes, particularly a certain Paiute band, although a few are made by the Havasupai. Perhaps one reason for this decline of basketmaking lies in the restrictions which surround the basketmaker and even includes her materials. If such ritual requirements as avoidance of the worker and her materials, or if she should overstep the regulations set for skill and speed, sickness and rheumatic stiffness would ensue, necessitating an expensive and complicated ceremony by a medicine-man.

Coiled basket bowls, coiled water-bottles of characteristic form, and a special type of carrying basket were made. The coiled bowls were of sumac twigs, split three ways, sewed on a rod-and-bundle foundation with firm, close stitches, so that a few minutes' soaking would render the vessel watertight. Decoration was limited to certain ceremonial patterns in prescribed colors obtained from native dyes. Red was produced from the root of mountain mahogany ground with alder bark; dark-blue from indigo and a native bluish clay; yellow from sorrel and sneeze-weed; black from surface coal added to boiling sumac-leaves or from sulphurous rock roasted with piñon-gum. Significant of the ceremonial character of Navaho basketry was the opening left in each design, analogous to the unfinished encircling bands on Pueblo pottery. This opening was called "the way out," or "the line leading out," and was required in order to prevent the maker from enclosing herself in her work, thus losing sight and mind. Such baskets were an integral part of every rite. They were used as drums; as receptacles for rattles, prayer-sticks, sacred stones, herbs, medicines, and other ceremonial paraphernalia; as the utensil in which the ceremonial bath was given in healing ceremonies; as a support for the mask of the Fringed Mouth; and, best known of all uses, for serving corn-meal mush during the wedding ceremony.

Utility baskets consisted of coiled water-bottles with round bodies and long straight necks, with handles of fiber cord or

horsehair. They were of sumac or willow twigs sewed firmly over a rod-and-bundle foundation, and rendered water-tight by covering with melted piñon-gum inside and out. Wicker carrying baskets, similar to those still used by the Hopi, may have been copied from the Pueblos.

POTTERY—In comparison with neighboring Pueblo tribes, but little pottery was made by the Navaho, and that little declined in quality and quantity throughout the historic period until today only a few cooking-pots are made.

Pottery was made by the coil method, similar to that of the Pueblos. A bluish clay, tempered with pulverized pot-

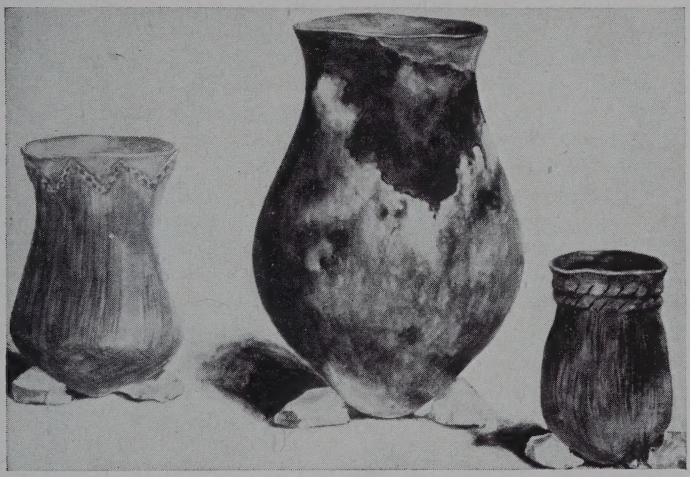

FIG. 9—Navaho cooking-pots, still manufactured by a few old women. From a watercolor of specimens in The Southwest Museum by Evelyn Nadeau.

sherds, was preferred. A lump of clay was flattened for the base, then the vessel was built up coil by coil, each one pressed and gently kneaded into the one below. After the pot had been shaped as desired, it was rubbed smooth with a corncob, or with a gourd scraper obtained from the Pueblos. Decoration on cooking-pots consisted of small indentations made with the thumb or a small stick, scallops around the rim, or a wavy ridge fashioned by the addition of a narrow fillet of clay near the rim. The vessel was then covered with a coating of piñon-gum and allowed to dry. It was fired over a slow fire of sheep or cow dung and left to burn for several

hours. Fuel used before the introduction of domestic animals probably consisted of bark and dry branches, although the use of coal for the purpose may have been copied from the Hopi. The usual form of cooking-pot was roughly cylindrical with rounded or pointed base. The wall was slightly constricted, then very slightly flared again.

In prehistoric and early historic times a really beautiful painted ware was made, chiefly in the form of bowls used as food dishes, for washing and dyeing wools and clothing, and for non-ritual hair-washing. In all ritual bathing, baskets were used. Other forms no longer manufactured by the Navaho included plain and painted water-bottles and canteens, dippers, and ladles, as well as rude figurines of men, women, and animals as playthings for children. In the early days of silversmithing women made crucibles for use of the smiths, but these were soon replaced by those obtained from traders. Large jars covered with skin were used as drums during certain ceremonies.

In the old days several women worked together in a hoghán away from everyone else. These usually included a young potter, her teacher, and a few pottery-making friends. Work was divided among the women, one making painted bowls, another large cooking-pots, others small unpainted jars. Among ritual restrictions were the isolation of the pottery, absence of observers, avoidance of stepping over paraphernalia and clays, careful preservation of the metate on which the clays were ground. Tools included scrapers made of singed corncobs or of gourds, waterworn pebbles for polishing, yucca-leaf paint brushes, digging-sticks for obtaining the clay, and metate and mano for grinding the clay.

WEAVING—Weaving, one of the most important Navaho crafts of the modern period, was not adopted until some time after the introduction of sheep in the Southwest by the Spanish, and it was not until the 18th century that references to the Navaho as weavers occurred in historical records. The earliest reference to Navaho weaving appears in a Spanish account dating from 1706. The next is found in a letter from Teodoro de Croix, Commander-General of the Interior Provinces of New Spain, written on February 23, 1780. The next occurs in a letter from Governor Fernando de Chacón, dated July 15, 1795, in which it is stated that the Navaho work their wool with more delicacy and taste than the Spaniards. By 1799 Navaho weaving had become an industry of

economic importance in the area. Don José de Cortéz wrote in that year that Navaho manufactures of serge, blankets, and other coarse cloths were exchanged for necessities in New Mexico. By 1812 Pedro Pino pronounced Navaho fabrics as the most valuable in the provinces of New Mexico, Sonora, and Chihuahua. Thus the product of the Navaho looms has for many years placed this tribe in a position of economic independence.

FIG. 10—Navaho woman carding wool. (Drawn by Myrtle G. McIntyre)

The loom itself was of the type on which the Pueblos had woven cotton kilts and shawls for centuries before the intrusive Spaniards came with their flocks. Navaho raiders had been bringing Pueblo wives and slaves to their hogháns ever since the arrival of the tribe in the Southwest, but Pueblo crafts had not penetrated Navaho consciousness. How the wool from Spanish sheep became united with the loom of Pueblo men by the nimble fingers of Navaho women is as yet an unsolved mystery. Weaving, a man's craft in the Southwest, became the art of Navaho women.

Care of the sheep devolved upon the women, with help

in herding from children (figs. 4 and 6.) Sheared wool was carefully sorted, coarse and long strands put aside for warp thread, medium wool separated from that which was too fine or too short for weaving, and the burrs picked out. The sorted wool was spread on a slanting rock and washed in hot water in which yucca-root had been boiled. The wool was dried on the rock or on bushes. In much earlier times wool was not washed, merely shaken, and burrs and sticks removed. Wool cards for combing the cleansed wool into a thick fluffy rope

FIG. 11—Navaho woman spinning. (Drawn by Myrtle G. McIntyre)

for spinning were originally made by tying teasel-burrs into a frame in imitation of an old Spanish custom, but of late years cards have been purchased from traders.

The spindle, of Pueblo type, consisted of a wooden shaft with a wooden disk to serve as the whorl. The spindle rested on the ground by the spinner, who held the wool about on a line with the twirling spindle, spinning and re-spinning until the yarn was of the desired thickness. Dyeing usually followed spinning. Dyes consisted of a coloring matter and a mordant to fix the color so that it would not run. Earthen pots, which would not react to the chemicals of the mor-

dant, were preferred for dye-pots. Colors included natural black and white wool, and a gray obtained by a mixture of both. For the best blankets a rich black was obtained by a combination of aromatic sumac, native yellow ocher, and piñon-gum, prepared by means of a long and complicated process. Yellow dye was made from flowering tops of goldenrod and native alunogen, or dock or sorrel-roots with native alum or rock-salt. Different shades of yellow resulted from different combinations and methods of preparation, ranging in hue from pale lemon to orange. Indigo added to a mixture of goldenrod leaves and blossoms provided a shade of greenish yellow, and a pure clear green followed a brief immersion in indigo. Differently prepared and applied, indigo provided a rich dark-blue. There was probably no red dye for wool in early times, but later cochineal was obtained by trade, and later still commercial red dyes were purchased. A beautiful shade of red came from red baize, or bayeta, purchased from traders, raveled and respun into fine yarn. Other woolen fabrics may also have been raveled and respun, but to a lesser extent.

There were, and are, no ritual observances in the erection of the Navaho loom, nor were any special rites followed by the weaver. The simple vertical Pueblo type of loom required no elaborate paraphernalia. It could be set up with the most primitive materials, and had the added advantage of being easily moved from place to place. The loom frame consisted of two upright posts set in the ground, or two living trees properly spaced. The uprights were braced with two strong cross-pieces. The warp was fastened to a border cord lashed or tied with rope to the upper and lower loom-beams. Heald-rods, the number depending on the type of weave, opened the shed for the introduction of the yarn, and were supplemented by a weaving sword or batten, which served the double purpose of opening the shed wider and for pounding the weft in place after it had been shoved down with a wooden comb. An expert weaver understood the nine fundamental classes of weaves, which included plain weave, diagonal twill, five different diamond twills, two-faced, and double cloth. The weft yarn was rolled in small balls and pushed through with the finger to form the design. When the woven portion of blanket became too long for the seated weaver to reach, the yarn-beam was lowered, a fold made in the loosened web and sewed to the cloth-beam. This was repeated until the blanket was finished.

Textiles woven on this upright loom included the woman's dress, woven in two identical pieces sewed together after weaving; man's shirt, made like its Pueblo prototype, a poncho-like garment with sleeves woven separately and sewed in place; woman's shoulder blanket of two patterns; man's shoulder blanket, better known as a "chief's blanket"; striped serape, indicative of Mexican influence, woven in one piece, sometimes with a slit left for the head; the poncho, more characteristically Navaho, firm and tight, with figured pattern and a slit left in the center for the head, usually of exceptionally fine workmanship, often made of bayeta; saddle blanket, frequently twilled; saddle throw, as a rule made of

FIG. 12—Navaho woman at loom before her hoghán.
(Photo by J. K. Hillers prior to 1884)

germantown yarn with tassel ends, thrown across the saddle for comfort of the rider; the saddle girth; and of late years a heavier floor rug for trade, usually plain weave.

Toward the end of the 19th century commercial yarns, chiefly from mills in Germantown, Pennsylvania, were introduced, but their use was discouraged, and soon after the turn of the century traders ceased carrying them in stock. Blankets woven of these yarns were characterized by a variety of colors woven into elaborate patterns. Table and couch covers, runners and pillow covers were made for the tourist trade. Sashes, garters, hair-cords, and the carrying cord for the cradle were woven on the belt-loom, usually with german-

town yarn, frequently on a cotton cord warp. The warp for this loom, probably a Mexican importation, was wound in a continuous string. The upper beam of the loom was secured

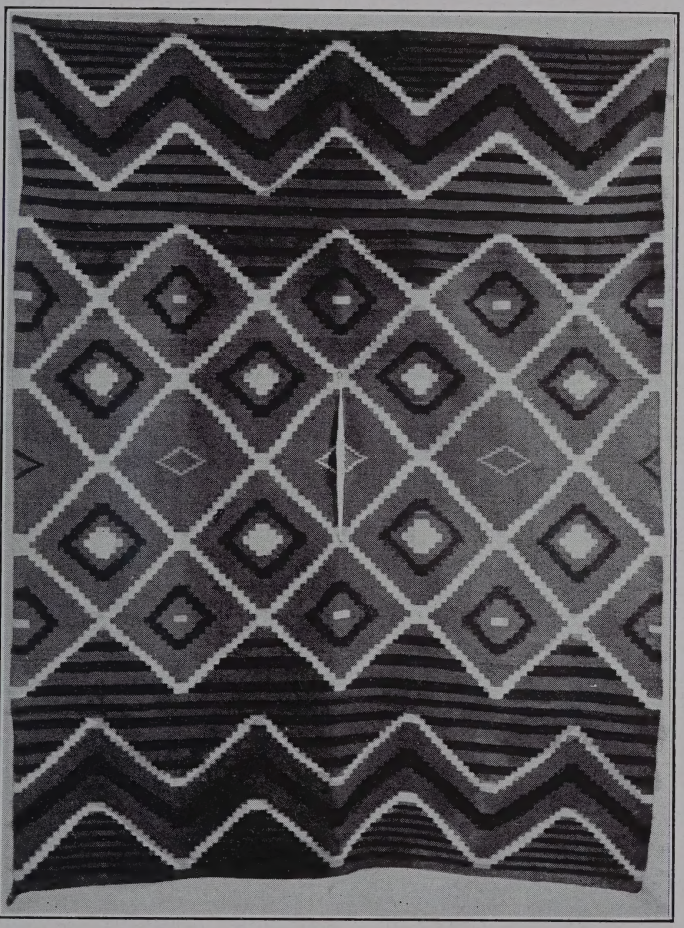

FIG. 13—A fine Navaho bayeta poncho in the Charles F. Lummis Collection, Southwest Museum (457-G-2)

to a rafter or post, while the lower end was attached to a rope which passed around and under the thighs of the weaver, who thus held the warp tense with her weight. A damask

effect was produced by raising certain warp-threads, so that the weft might be passed twice or more beneath them. This type of loom was the only style known in Central and South America in ancient times.

Designs on Navaho blankets may be said to fall into four pattern-types, each preëminent at a given period and continuing in use until the present. Until 1800 plain stripes were the only style of design; terraced patterns then became of primary interest. while stripes, although appearing in all specimens, retired to second place; from 1863 until 1900 the diamond pattern was most popular, although it never controlled the designs as did stripes and terraces; finally the plain bordered pattern, which is still in use, appeared about 1900. During later transition periods the patterns became crowded, figures such as railroad trains, army insignia, flags, and eagles, were introduced, particularly in blankets woven of germantown yarn. Most recent development in design appears in blankets copied from sand-paintings, which, although interesting, are neither ceremonial nor symbolic. The Navaho have never woven ceremonial blankets, deerskins from ritually killed deer serving all such purposes. Serious students of Navaho weaving do not advocate the symbolic interpretation of Navaho design. Although meanings are expressed by certain designs, these do not represent symbols.

In the matter of size, Navaho women seem to vie with one another in weaving prodigiously large rugs. Such a rug, measuring 21 by 36 feet, was exhibited in 1943 at the Intertribal Indian Ceremonial in Gallup, New Mexico. The Navaho, however, never wove rugs or blankets of such size for their own use.

SILVERSMITHING—The manufacture of silver ornaments is of even more recent introduction to the Navaho than weaving. The Navaho learned the craft from Mexican silversmiths who plied their trade in the region about the middle of the 19th century. So far as is known, the first dated reference to such a Mexican smith appeared in a letter written by Capt. Henry L. Dodge, Navaho agent, to the *Santa Fe Weekly Gazette,* November 16, 1853. The first known Navaho silversmith was Atsidi Sani (the old Smith), called by Mexicans "Herrero Delgadito" (Little Lean Iron Worker), who learned his craft from the Mexican silversmith above. By 1864 there were two or three Navaho silversmiths in the region, making a few buttons and bracelets, plain or ornamented with incised

and engraved patterns. Between 1864 and 1867 stamped designs were introduced, copied from Mexican leather patterns, made with crude native punches. Although a few rings and bracelets were set with native garnets as early as 1880, the use of turquoise for this purpose apparently did not begin until about 1900. Soldiers at Fort Defiance, Arizona, and New Fort Wingate, New Mexico, supplied the first American coin silver used by Navaho smiths, but it was not until 1871-1872 that Mexican *pesos* were introduced by Charles Crary, who opened the first trading post in the Navaho country near Ganado Lake, Arizona. Copper and brass were often used for ornaments before silver became plentiful.

FIG. 14—Navaho silversmith working the bellows of his primitive forge, with his tools scattered about. (P. F. Gates Collection, Southwest Museum.)

Until recently the Navaho silversmith possessed only a few simple tools, usually of home manufacture, such as might easily be transported from place to place. He required a forge, bellows, anvil, crucibles, molds, fuel, solder, chasing and engraving tools, and a polishing material. His forge consisted of a square structure of stones and adobe, built at a convenient height, the rear slightly elevated, with a bowl-shape fireplace in the middle, and having two wooden tubes joined in one, ending at the fireplace. Bellows were of sheepskin, the 18-inch bag distended with hoops of willow twigs, with nozzles fitting

into one of the fireplace tubes. Two such bellows were required. The anvil was of hard stone, or a solid piece of iron, such as a pick-head, ax-blade, or segment of iron rail. Crucibles, formerly made of pottery, later obtained from the trading post, were used for melting the metal. Molds were cut or chiseled into sandstone, iron, or wood, or might be formed of clay; they resembled the objects to be made as closely as possible, and were greased with mutton tallow before the molten silver was poured into them. Bead molds were cut in hard wood or iron, as beads were not cast, but pounded into shape and the halves soldered together. Charcoal made from juniper wood, plentiful in the Navaho country, served for fuel. The blowpipe used in soldering, formerly made of brass or copper by the smith, was wire hammered into tubular form, but is now purchased. Soldering materials consisted of a native alum, now replaced by borax, saliva, and silver dust. For whitening, the tarnished or oxidized silver was boiled in rock salt, also plentiful in the region, while sandstone, sand, and ashes served for polishing with a bit of soft deerskin. Later sandpaper and emery, obtained from a convenient trading post, replaced native polishing agents. Other tools included shears for cutting sheet silver, hammers, vices, nippers, pliers, tongs, punches, and steel stamps. In early days most of these tools were fashioned by the smiths, who were as often as not workers in iron as well as silver.

By 1883, when the first study of Navaho silversmithing was published by Dr. Washington Matthews, smiths were making bracelets, rings, necklaces, buttons, oval disks known as *conchas,* powder chargers used with muzzle-loading guns, and small canteens, miniatures of those used by troopers stationed in the Southwest. Necklaces were ornamented with single and double crosses representing the morning star. Early styles of ornaments included fluted wide bracelets; simple wire bracelets, both round and twisted; triangular bracelets; large belt *conchas;* several simple types of earrings, and finger rings. Many of these forms were derived from ornaments worn by Plains Indians and the mountain Ute. Other forms were copied from Mexican and Spanish ornaments, such as beads made in imitation of pomegranate buds (not "squash blossoms" as they are popularly called), buttons, silver-mounted bridles, and the crescent-shape pendant known by the name of *nája.* Americans contributed such forms as small canteens for carrying tobacco, and the powder chargers no longer manufactured, as well as the infinite variety of articles including

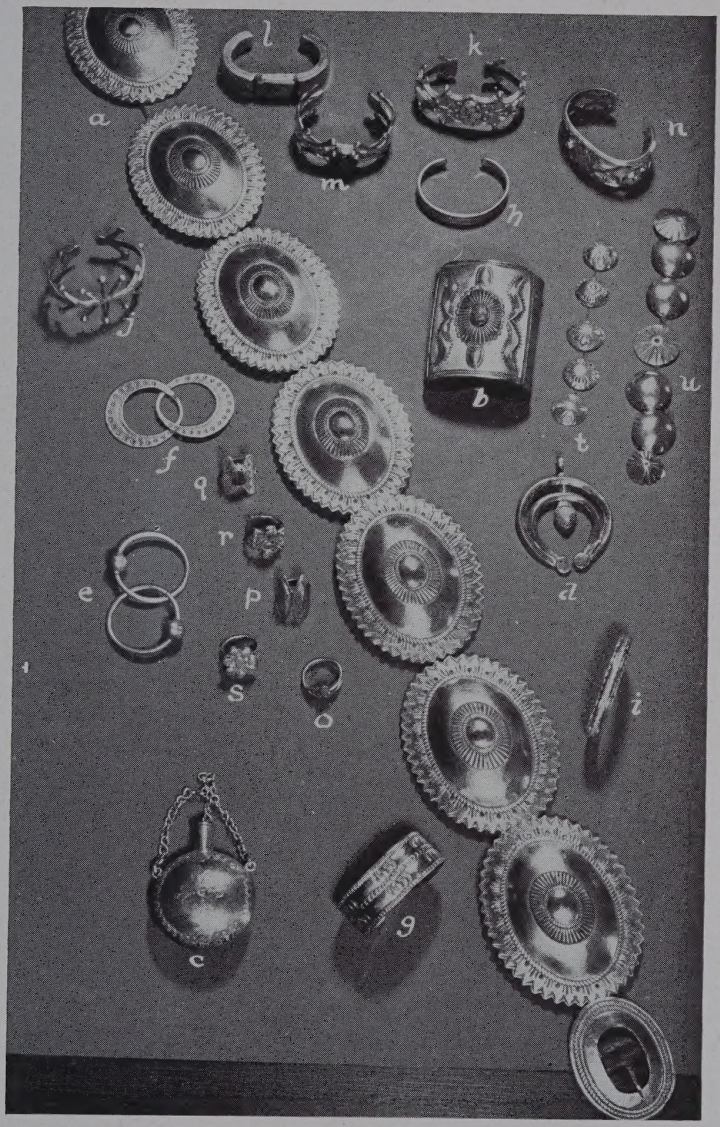

FIG. 15—Various Navaho silver ornaments. *a*, Conchas on leather belt; *b*, Wrist-guard with turquoise setting; *c*, Tobacco bottle in form of army canteen; *d*, Crescentic pendant with turquoise setting; *e*, *f*, Earrings; *g-n*, Bracelets; *o-s*, Rings; *t-u*, Buttons (S. W. M. collections).

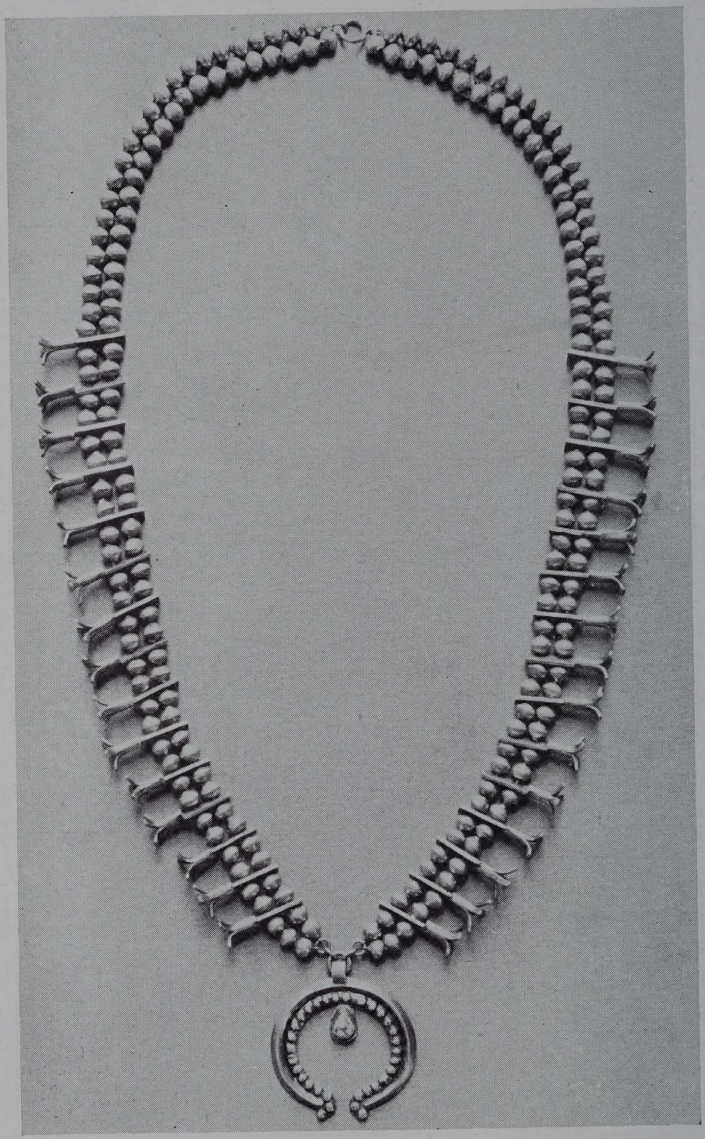

FIG. 16—Navaho necklace with double strand of silver beads alternating with pomegranate blossoms and with silver and turquoise pendant. (Zahrah Preble Hodge Collection, S. W. M. 558-G-11)

tie-clasps, book-marks, teaspoons, brooches, boxes, ash-trays, and bangles, to be seen in every Western curio shop.

SOCIAL LIFE

THE CLAN—Navaho social organization is based on the clan, a system of tracing descent through the female line from a supposed common female ancestor. Members of each clan consider themselves akin, hence marriage is not permitted within the clan. Certain of the clans are closely affiliated, and often members marry into one of these clans with which they feel a closer bond of union. Names of clans are of local origin; they have no totemic significance, although some are named for animals, as names were assigned after the clan had been created. The number of Navaho clans is uncertain; authorities claim as few as 51 and as many as 64. The addition of new clans has usually come about through the adoption of new peoples. Names of clans include those of Navaho localities, Pueblo clan names (through intermarriage with Pueblo women), nicknames, and names of aliens such as Mexican, Ute, Apache, and Sioux.

The principal function of the Navaho clan is to regulate marriage. The clan has no political significance. There were no clan heads in the early days, and those serving as chiefs at the present time act mainly as intermediaries between the tribe and the United States Government. Although the clan has certain ceremonial functions, it really plays little part in the religious life. Children always belong to the clan of the mother.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION—As the Navaho political organization is a genuine democracy, chiefs or headmen are selected by popular choice from the rank-and-file, and not from any particular class or clan. In former time the tribe was represented by a council of twelve chiefs, to whom all matters of importance were submitted for decision. At the present time headmen chosen by the consent of the people represent small districts, recognized by headmen of other districts and by the Indian agent, all working together in matters of importance. These headmen settle local disputes, direct such communal matters relating to agriculture as opening new fields or constructing irrigation ditches, and in general act to preserve law and order.

HOME-LIFE—The Navaho live together as a family unit, consisting of children, their parents, the mother's parents and

grandparents. When a girl marries, her hoghán is generally built near that of her mother.

GROWING UP—The birth of a baby is an occasion for joyful celebration, for children are dearly loved by the Navaho. If the newborn turn out to be twins, the rejoicing is doubled, for the parents consider themselves the recipients of divine favor. Twice as many ceremonies for the health and well-being of the little newcomers are given for twins as for single babies. The fathers are as delighted as the mothers, and share in the care of the infant. Each child has four cradles before it is old enough to toddle about alone. The first, used for about twenty-five days, is a mere shelter of boughs to protect the little head from sparks and bumps. A cradle of laced twigs, softened by a blanket pillow, then supplements the shade, and the little one retains it for about two months, when it is replaced by a single board, notched deeply at the top and with holes pierced for the lacing. This is used for another month, when the fourth and last cradle takes its place. This consists of two boards laced together, a footrest, and a bow for a protective canopy. It is lined with soft bark of cliff rose, over which the blanket is laid, on which the child is placed, wrapped snugly in a blanket and laced comfortably to prevent slipping. (See figs. 8 and 17.) The first three cradles are discarded, but the fourth may be used in turn for several children.

Navaho children are seldom punished, but treated with uniform kindness. Boys and girls from seven to twelve herd sheep, finding pleasure in bits of bright-colored stone, flowers, and pet animals. Mothers instruct their daughters in housework and weaving. An especially gifted girl might begin to weave when but five years of age, but usually a child is eight or ten before she has her first lesson on a tiny loom suited to her short arms. Spinning is taught about the same time. Gradually the maiden learns the multitude of tasks which fill her mother's days. There is no limit to the amount of tribal lore a girl may acquire if she so desires. In the old warlike days boys received rigorous training in order to become strong and agile. Mere babies were bathed in the snow in order that they might be hardened to changes of temperature; boys and youths were urged to practice running, dodging, the use of shield and spear, shooting with bow and arrow, as well as every artifice known to cunning warriors. They were taught to subsist on corn and venison, with such wild

herbs as may be found on the march. In recent times crafts of peace have replaced those of war, and boys have learned to herd sheep and cattle, make silver ornaments, and farm the garden patches, taught by their fathers and uncles, as girls are taught by mothers and aunts. Children are allowed considerable freedom of action, but courtesy to elders and adherence to conventions are strictly enforced.

Little children are given names by influential relatives, although in old days this was the duty of the Peace Chief. The names usually relate to war, and are seldom spoken, except by the medicine-man during healing ceremonies. Nicknames, suggested by physical characteristics, geographical location, or relationships, replace the sacred names for daily use. *Hastin*, meaning "man," usually implies that the person has some claim to respect for age and accomplishment. *Estsa* means "woman." Parents are often known as mother or father of so-and-so, and children are called so-and-so's daughter or son until nearly grown. Sacred names, not in daily use, are "kept" by the women of the household until needed.

A special rite is held for a girl when she "comes of age"; it is called a "sing," and is in the nature of a vigil, presided over by a medicine-man, accompanied by a feast. The maid sits demurely in the hoghán with the singer, a chorus of young men, and as many of her family and friends as the dwelling will hold. The ceremony itself consists of pressing and molding the child's body and ceremonial bathing. All in attendance must remain awake, for if anyone fell asleep the girl would have bad luck. At dawn she races with the boys toward the east, and upon her return is again bathed, spotted with clay, her hair dressed, and new clothing donned. A special sweet cake, made from sprouted corn, which has been baking all night in an underground oven, is served after the race.

Boys and girls undergo a fourfold initiation ceremony, consisting of looking on four different sets of masks and personators. A number of children are initiated at one time. On the day of the ceremony the two gods (*yeibichai*) are asked to whip the children brought for initiation. The boys strip to the breechcloth and line up in a row, the girls fully dressed behind them. The *yeibichai* approach each one, every child rising in turn. The *yeibichai* sprinkle with pollen the shins, legs, each shoulder, front and back, and the outstretched arms, after which the Female God lashes each boy. The girls are not whipped; instead, the Whipping God presses an ear of

white and yellow corn wrapped with spruce against the soles of their feet, the shins, legs, breast, back, shoulders, arms, and forehead, accompanying each pressure with his customary cry. Thereupon the personators remove their masks and the *yeib ad* holds his half-mask to every child, fitting it to its eyes

FIG. 17—Navaho baby on cradle-board. (Photo by Warren C. Dickerson)

with his usual call. Then the children, who have been sitting with downcast eyes, are told to look up and never to forget the gods, to behold the smiling faces of two well-known Navaho. The ceremony is closed by the children placing pollen on the masks, with a warning not to tell what they have seen.

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE—Choice of a mate among the Navaho rests with the young man and his family, who select a

bride in family conclave. Among other requirements, the girl's family must be of honor and standing in the community, and, although wealth may be desirable, it is not necessary. The youth asks his uncle or a friend of prominence to act for him, and the intermediary, accompanied by the lad's father or mother, visits the parents of the girl, offering the customary gift, which may consist of ten or fifteen horses or the equivalent in goods or money, in proportion to the wealth and importance of the two families. This gift is in no way considered in the light of a purchase, "as the Navaho do not sell their children." Preparations for the wedding include gathering of gifts by the young man's family and the collection of provisions for the feast by relatives of the girl. When the wedding day arrives, the young people, clad in their best, enter the bride's home and go through a ceremony which includes washing each other's hands and the eating of a special cornmeal porridge served in a ceremonial basket, under the supervision of the medicine-man. The young couple are congratulated on the step they are taking, and given advice as to their future conduct. They begin housekeeping in a hoghán built at a little distance from that of the girl's mother, inasmuch as the institution of mother-in-law taboo prevents the association of son and mother-in-law. The bride's mother may not even attend the wedding ceremony, as she must never look upon the face of her daughter's husband.

Polygynous marriages were formerly the rule, rather than the exception, a man marrying a sister of the first wife, because relatives would get along well together. There was no ceremony for a second marriage.

Divorce is not unusual, grounds usually consisting of interference on the part of clansmen and relatives, and infidelity. The children belong to the mother and her people. Divorce is no barrier to re-marriage.

DEATH AND MOURNING—The Navaho have great fear of the dead and their possessions, with an inexpressible terror of ghosts. When it is evident that illness will terminate in death, the sick person is often removed from the hoghán to a shelter or an unused dwelling, and forthwith dressed for burial regardless of suffering, to eliminate the necessity for handling the corpse. If death should occur in a hoghán, the doorway on the east side is closed and an opening made in the north wall for the removal of the body. Two or four mourners are chosen, consisting of near relatives, and clansmen, as well

as members of affiliated clans, who prepare the body for burial. Bathed and dressed in his or her best clothing and ornaments, the body is carried to a lonely spot chosen for interment, usually a crevice among the rocks. Formerly this task was performed by slaves, who were later slain on the grave, that their spirits might accompany the spirit of their owner, but now the duty devolves on the mourners, who usually try to employ an outsider to do it. As there is some disagreement as to whether the Navaho originated in the north or the east, some bodies are placed with the head in one direction, some in the other. After the grave has been filled, the tools used are broken and left on the grave, the best horse of the deceased is killed, and the trappings and saddle gear are so damaged as to be worthless. The hoghán is burned or abandoned, and all utensils used about the body are destroyed. Mourning lasts four days, the mourners remaining in the family hoghán (not the one in which death occurred) for that period. On the fifth morning, family and mourners bathe, and the ceremony is concluded with a brief period of wailing.

PROPERTY AND INHERITANCE — Among the Navaho all property is owned by individuals, except land, which is not regarded in the sense of property and therefore cannot be owned by anyone. It is used by certain individuals who have the right to it, but if it remains unused or is neglected, others may obtain the right to make use of the plot. Property, to them, consists of hard goods, such as cash, silver ornaments, precious stones, and horse trappings; soft goods, such as calico and other materials, blankets, rugs, sheepskins, and clothing; intangible wealth, which consists of such assets as the name of a person; knowledge, whether acquired by formal instruction or by experience, such as chants or medicine-lore; power of divination; "sacred names" of property possessed by certain individuals, as well as other powers impossible to define. Ceremonial paraphernalia may belong to individuals who lend it to those needing it. Everything owned by a Navaho, tangible or intangible, is personal property, and as such may be disposed of by the owner as he or she chooses. Navaho husbands and wives do not share community property. The wife has her own sheep and the right to dispose of them and of the products of her labors as she desires. Property rights of children are as carefully considered as those of adults. Babies and young children are often given sheep, so that by the time they

are grown they are independent. Wives often have larger incomes than their husbands, and so control family finances. Expenses, however, are shared on a proportionate basis, the wealthier of the two contributing the more to the family welfare. Wealth does not control prestige, however, which is more dependent on less tangible assets.

As personal property, except flocks and herds, is destroyed on the death of the owner, there is little question of inheritance. Such possessions as are not destroyed belong to clan relatives. That is, a man's belongings go, not to his children, but his brothers and sisters, those of a wife to her children and immediate family. At present, however, especially in the event of a civil marriage, American laws of inheritance are sometimes followed.

WAR AND HUNTING—So completely have the Navaho settled into the part of peaceful shepherds and industrious artisans that it is hard to believe that not until after the close of the Civil War was this tribe, one of the most dreaded of the warrior bands of the Southwest, fully subdued. Hunting and war were the man's chief objects of life. Raids were undertaken chiefly for the purpose of increasing the number of slaves owned by the tribe, and therefore enemies were taken captive whenever possible. The Navaho, unlike the Apache, did not torture their captives, but sometimes took scalps. The scalp was carried at the end of a pole, kept at a distance, until a war-dance could be held, after which the warrior decorated his spear or belt with the trophy of his prowess. Slavery is said to exist no longer. Slaves performed the more arduous tasks, such as herding and farming. Slave women were not taught to weave, as this craft was considered the sacred trust of Navaho women who, however, learned the textile art from the captives.

War set the criterion for prestige among the Navaho, and even women might go to war and achieve high positions in the tribe thereby. As a rule, war meant raids on peaceful Pueblos or Mexican villagers, where rich plunder, from the Indian point of view, and slaves might be secured. A singer of the war rite accompanied war-parties, and the most experienced headman was chosen as leader. Enemies to be dreaded were the Ute, White Mountain Apache, Mescalero Apache, and Comanche. Between raids, in the rare intervals of peace, sentinels guarded the hunting grounds, stationed on high lookouts, signaling by means of fire by night and smoke by day.

Weapons included the spear, how and arrow, stone ax, and rawhide shield. The spear, a wooden shaft 7 to 8 feet long, was tipped with a chipped stone point, later replaced by metal, and decorated with a tuft of eagle-feathers, and an enemy scalp if the owner possessed one. The bow, always used in war, is of oak, juniper or sumac, and black greasewood. It is a self-bow, that is, made of a single piece of wood, shaped and smoothed so that it curves in the center, wrapped with sinew of mountain-sheep or deer at each end and in the middle, and covered with pine pitch. The bowstring, of twisted sinew, is securely fastened at one end, but detachable at the other so that the bow can be quickly strung. Arrows are also of hard wood, such as wild currant or black greasewood, with the bark removed. They are smoothed, then straightened by means of grooved stones or pieces of mountain-sheep horn having perforations of proper size through which the shafts are passed. A double zigzag line, representing lightning, is carved down the length of each arrow, and it is finished with eagle, hawk, crow, or turkey feathers. In early times arrows were tipped with points of white flint or other suitable stone, but later a triangular bit of iron was substituted. A leather bow-guard, worn to protect the wrist from the rebound of the bowstring, is nowadays often beautifully ornamented with silver disks and turquoise.

Bows and arrows were formerly carried in a quiver of mountain-lion skin, which was slung over the shoulder in time of war, but carried at the belt in more peaceful days. Of late years archers have carried a few arrows and the bow in the hand, picking up the arrows after shooting.

Shields, round or oval, were made of rawhide and trimmed with eagle-feathers around the edge and having painted designs relating to war, such as the sun, rainbow, crescent, bear's foot, or Slayer of Enemies, a mythological character. The shield was carried by means of a band across the right shoulder and supported by a deerskin thong held in the left hand. After the introduction of firearms, the shield became useless, and is now retained as a family heirloom.

A stone ax, mounted on a wooden handle, was carried for use at close range.

Weapons for hunting included the bow and arrow, and stone ax or club. Deer, antelope, and elk were hunted only under the guidance of a medicine-man. Large game was caught by means of corrals of brush into which animals were driven for slaughter. Hunters sometimes stalk game by wearing the

head and hide of a deer or antelope about the shoulders. Animals intended for ritual are always ceremonially killed, usually by strangling. Bears are seldom hunted, and only with appropriate rites and ceremonies. Small animals were shot with the bow and arrow or snared in stone traps. Rabbits might be run down in the snow, or taken by means of a rabbit drive in which many take part. Birds are usually snared, but eagles are captured alive by means of a dummy rabbit worked with strings, and often released after being robbed of their feathers. As Navaho Indians have a taboo against any fish, and even waterfowl, fishing is unknown.

GAMES AND DIVERSIONS—Although many of the older Navaho games have been forgotten, a few are still played, among them the hoop-and-pole game, stick dice, moccasin game, and archery. Modern card games, particularly monte and "coon can," have replaced the old-time forms of amusement. All native games, old and new, are accompanied by gambling.

The hoop-and-pole game is now seldom played. A deerskin-wrapped hoop ranging from an inch to 6 inches in diameter is rolled over an east-to-west course, and the pole is thrown while the hoop is in motion in an effort to thrust it through the opening. For the game as played today the hoop is 8 to 10 inches in diameter, and the pole about 5 feet long, decorated with deerskin thongs called "turkey feet." Smaller poles were used for smaller rings. This is a man's game.

Ball race, also played by men, was formerly engaged in spring and fall, but has now nearly died out. A small stick was kicked by the contestants over an agreed course. The best runners were chosen by each side, and the race required skill as well as speed, for the "ball" could only be touched by the toe, no matter whether it fell in a clump of cactus or in a prairie-dog hole. It seems probable that this form of sport was adopted from the Zuñi.

Shinny, which has degenerated into a children's game, is played with a bag-shape ball of deerskin, struck by a curved stick. The object of the game is to put the ball over the opponent's goal line.

The moccasin game is the Navaho man's equivalent for "hunt the slipper," and consists of hiding a small pebble in one of four moccasins, which are then buried so that only the tips show. The opposing side attempts to guess the hiding place of the ball. All of the 102 counting sticks must be gained by the winning side. The game is usually played at

night in accordance with its legendary origin, when the creatures of day and night played it to decide whether light or darkness should prevail. The game was interrupted, and as a consequence day follows night in rotation. Rules are very strict, particularly those intended to prevent cheating.

Horse-racing and foot-racing have replaced the ball race and other active games. The chicken pull is also a popular modern acquisition, learned from Mexicans. A chicken, which may be alive or dead, or only an imitation, is partly buried in the ground. Riders gallop at top speed, try to snatch the trophy from its grave, the winner racing to return it to the patron of the game before an opponent can capture it.

Dice, here as elsewhere the woman's game, is said to be of legendary origin. Navaho women play a game of stick dice around a circle of 40 stones. Three staves are thrown on a flat stone with such force that they bounce upward to rebound from a blanket stretched overhead, to fall back within the circle. Small twigs placed between the stones serve for counters, and the player who wins 40 points may take the stakes buried beneath the central stone. This game seems to be an adaptation of the Zuñi *tásholiwe*.

Children enjoy many games borrowed from white neighbors, such as marbles, top-spinning, and baseball. In winter, when the Spider people are at rest, grownups teach the little ones many variations of cat's cradle. The game is said to teach children attention to details and is thus considered educational, but it also serves to keep restless boys and girls quiet when weatherbound indoors. Little girls have dolls and cradles, and dishes of unbaked clay, while boys learn to shoot with small bows and untipped arrows.

DIVISION OF LABOR AND POSITION OF WOMEN—Navaho women work no less today than in ancient times, although the character of many of their tasks has altered with culture changes. The woman does all the cooking, takes care of the house and children, skins domestic animals after the men have butchered them, preserves and cooks the meat, makes all the clothing, except footgear, for the females of the family, weaves blankets for domestic use and for trade, and makes some baskets and pottery. The building of the home is the work of men, but the dwelling becomes the property of the wife when completed. Agriculture, formerly the work of slaves from other tribes, is shared by men and women alike. The herds of sheep, which are the chief means of livelihood of the Navaho, are under the supervision of women and children. Women still

gather wild plants for food, although not to such an extent as in the past. In the early days men devoted their time to hunting, raiding, and war, with time for complicated rituals and healing ceremonies. Today they are stockraisers primarily, while many work on the railroads and in other industries in the Southwest; many are expert silversmiths. Men, also, make moccasins, and knit the footless stockings or leggings.

Women are the heads of the household, with all the economic and social prestige that such positions would entail. They might become medicine-women, as a few do, although many who do not practice the art of healing memorize chants sung in healing ceremonies. A woman might also become a chief, as well as accompany a war-party. Men, however, lead in ceremonial and political life. In fact, there is a real equality between the sexes, based on mutual consideration and respect.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT—Although quarrels among neighbors and members of different clans occur frequently, the penalty for murder is a life for a life, exacted by relatives and clansmen of the victim. However, the payment of an arbitrary price will often be accepted in lieu of the death penalty. The amount exacted for the murder of a woman is greater than that paid if the victim is a man. At present, murderers are occasionally turned over to the authorities for punishment. Other crimes may lead to blows, but are usually settled by payment of damages determined after due consideration by the council, and consist most often of injury to the individual or to property. Stealing is rare.

THE UNIVERSE—According to the Navaho there are twelve worlds, of which their own, slightly oval in form, remains immovable on its flattened base, entirely surrounded by four rivers which flow into an opening in the western sky. The four vaults of the sky, supported by pillars placed at the cardinal points and in the center of the earth, are of the same form and size as the earth, and over all is unknown and uninhabited space. The sky is considered the husband of the earth, which is the mother of all forms of life, animal and vegetal.

Divine beings carry the sun and moon across the skies over thirty-two trails. The stars were created by Haschezhini (Hashch'ĕ'shzhĭ'ni), the Fire God, who named and set the constellations in their places. Coyote, who stole Haschezhini's pouch of stars and scattered the contents across the heavens, is sometimes credited with their creation. Astrology is well understood by many singers, but it is seldom discussed, as it is associated with witchcraft.

The Navaho tell time by the sun by day, beginning with dawn, followed by sunrise, midday, and sunset, ending with the approach of darkness; and by the stars at night. Eclipses are attributed to the death of the sun or the moon, which are brought back to life by their bearers.

Clouds, winds, fog, rain, snow, thunder, and lightning are personified by the Navaho. They dwell in the four skies, above, waiting to inflict disaster on the earth.

Navaho cardinal directions include east, south, west,, north, zenith, and nadir. As the east is the most important point, all ceremonies begin there, then follow the same sunwise sequence, to the south, west, and north. Each direction has its own color symbolism and attributes. To the east belongs the dawn, white for its color, white shell beads for jewels, and white corn; the cloudless skies belong to the south, with blue as its color, turquoise as its jewel, and blue corn; the evening twilight belongs to the west, yellow for its color, abalone its jewel, and the yellow corn; night and darkness belong to the north, so black is its color, cannel coal its jewel, and to it is assigned variegated corn. In sand-paintings and ceremonies the colors and symbols of the directions are always the same.

Although the Navaho year has but two seasons, winter and summer, there are twelve months, six assigned by the creators to the sky for winter, six to the earth for summer. The month begins with the new moon, and the year with the October moon. The following are the six winter months:

October, *ghăji,* "back to back," for this is the time that the white of winter and the yellow of summer meet, turn their backs on each other, the one to go forward into the new year, the other to go back over its old trail.

November, *nhltsĭ'tsŏ'si,* light or slender wind.
December, *nhltsĭ'tsó,* much or big wind.
January, *yăs nhlt'ēs,* melting snow.
February, *atsă' biyā'zh,* eaglets.
March, *wŏzhchĭ'd,* a word of obscure meaning.

The six summer months are:

April, *dăchĭl,* short corn.
May, *dă'tso,* tall corn.
June, *yă'ishjă' shchĭli,* "I insert the small grains," considered by some the month for planting.
July, *næeshjă'stso,* the big sugar cane.
August, *bĭnĭnt'ă'tsŏ'si,* light ripening.
September, *bĭnĭnt'ă'tso,* the great ripening, or harvest.

RELIGION—The Navaho possess such an elaborate religious system that it is doubtful if any one individual in the tribe could explain its intricate ramifications, particularly as details vary in different parts of the area. Religious observances are characterized chiefly by ceremonies known as chants, which are conducted by medicine-men called chanters or singers, from the Navaho word *hatáli*, meaning "a chanter." The *hatáli* memorize the complicated rituals and legends pertaining usually to only a single chant; that is, one medicine-man usu-

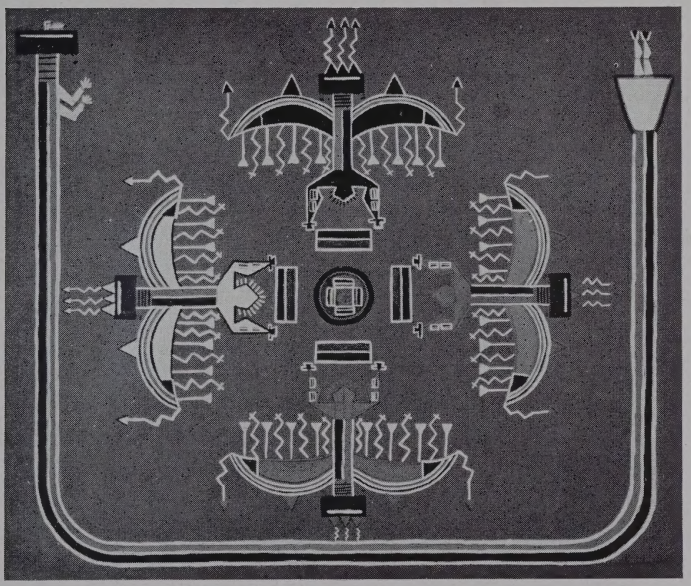

FIG. 18—Navaho sand-painting from the Wind-Way ceremony, a representation of four eagles around a water pool. Painted by Sam and Bennie Tilden. (General Charles McC. Reeve Collection, Southwest Museum; 491-G-1062)

ally knows only one ceremony thoroughly, and that after years of study under a master who teaches him the songs, myths, and sand-paintings.

Navaho gods are anthropomorphic, that is to say, they possess human characteristics, and they are both numerous and democratic, being kind, hospitable, and industrious, but subject to human passions and failings. The actions of the gods, however, are for good. Evil is attributed to the wrath of the Peoples, such as the Animals, Winds, and Lightnings. Secret

agents of evil cause disease and injury, by means of witchcraft. The form of worship which protects from evil is in greater demand than that which invokes blessings. The ceremony for blessing, however, is considered more important.

Navaho creation myths do not include a creator of all things. Apparently many beings have always existed, such as the Yéi, or gods, while others came into being in the journey to the present world. According to legend there existed twelve lower worlds, one above the other, through which the various creatures that came before man, progressed. The first four of these worlds are grouped as the dark world, the next or middle four as the red world, and the upper four as the blue world. The peoples (not human) who preceded man underwent various experiences, and finally climbed through hollow reeds to the hard vault of this earth, which was then prepared for its future inhabitants by the creation of the heavenly bodies. Seeds were planted, and clouds, winds, and thunder placed in the skies. Owing to wicked actions of the pre-human beings, monsters came into existence, to slay and be slain in turn.

The creation of the people of the earth is attributed to *Esdzanadle,* the Changing Woman, a goddess held in highest esteem by the Navaho. Although she may grow old, she has the power of making herself young and beautiful again. She dwells in a house in the west, exactly like that of her spouse, the Sun, in the east. She is also called *Yokai Estsan,* White Shell Woman, sometimes considered a separate personage. The various Navaho clans were created from the different parts of the body of *Esdzanadle,* at her home in the west. It is from the west that all good things come, such as mild rains and the growth of corn, all through her beneficent influence. According to another legend, man was created by White Shell Woman, with the aid of all the gods, from ears of yellow and white corn.

Important in Navaho mythology are the Twin War Gods, slayers of enemies, children of the Sun, who are named Slayer of Giants and Child of the Water. Aided by the Sun they destroyed the monsters, which are now associated only with witchcraft.

THE CHANTS—The origin of Navaho healing ceremonies, or chants, as they are known, is uncertain, but even the shortest and simplest possesses an astonishingly intricate and varied ritual. With the passing of the old chanters, many of the ancient ceremonies, with their legends, songs, and prayers, are becoming extinct. Moreover, as it is not necessary for the *hatáli* to learn the legend connected with a chant in

order to perform the ceremony, less conscientious medicine-men often omit the formality, so that the old legends are in danger of being forgotten.

There are two classes of chants. The first class begins with the lower worlds and deals with events moving upward to the emergence; it includes the *anáji,* or chant for dispelling foreign enemies, popularly known as the war-dance (*ndã*), and the *hozhóji,* rite of benediction, which is an integral and essential part of every Navaho chant. The second class of chants, which begins with legends following the emergence,

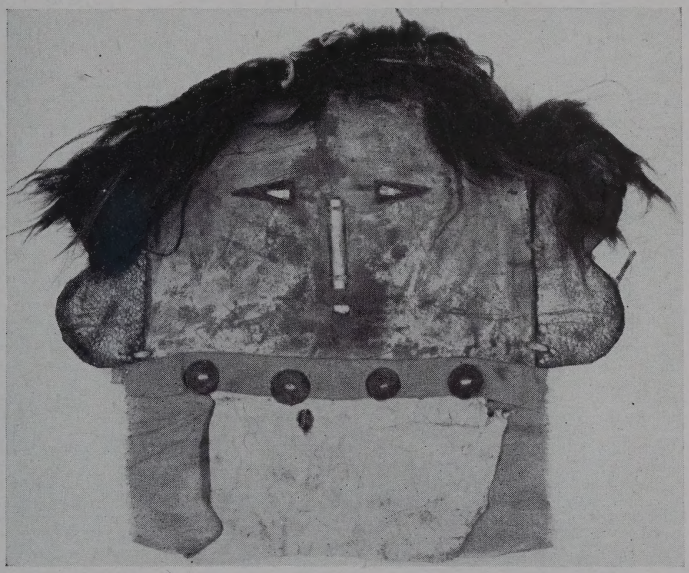

FIG. 19—Mask of Hastsébaad (also called Yébaad), a female Yéi, as worn in the Night Chant. Impersonators of goddesses wear face-masks, while those worn by males cover the entire head. (General Charles McC. Reeve Collection, Southwest Museum; 491-G-855)

are called the "happenings of the Holy Ones," as they are concerned chiefly with the *yéi,* or gods, with whom these ceremonies are supposed to have originated. The "happenings" include the well-known Mountain Chant and Night Chant. There are some sixteen of the first class, or moving-upward chants, and seven that relate to the *yéi.* In addition there are a number of chants that pertain to neither class, such as the big god chant and the Chiricahua Apache wind

chants, which are very popular. Some of the main chants have a number of variants. Ceremonies of divination usually precede various chants, and include divination by sight, by touch, and by hearing. In divination by sight the stars and such keen-sighted creatures as the magpie and turkey are consulted; by touch, the breeze, the winds, or the Gila monster;[1] and by hearing, the winds and animals with acute

FIG. 20—Navaho medicine-man and pupil. (Photo. by A. C. Vroman, P. G. Gates Collection, Southwest Museum)

hearing, such as the wolf or members of the cat family, are consulted.

Among the best known and most frequently presented chants at the present time are the following:

Klé̋jč Hatál, the Night Chant, also called *yéibčchai,* which lasts nine nights.

[1] The Southern derivation of this feature is evident, for the habitat of the Gila monster is far from the Navaho domain.

Tzĭlhkíchĭ Hatál, the Mountain Chant, a nine-night ceremony.

Hozhójĭ Hatál, the Happiness Chant, the rite of benediction, a part of every Navaho chant. One night of each nine-night ceremony is set aside for this chant, while a special set of *Hozhójĭ* songs are required to complete the five-night and one-night chants. It also is performed as a one-night ceremony of blessing for the hoghán, the family and belongings, and for any domestic occasions, from the birth of a child to the dedication of a new set of masks.

Natói Hatál, the Shooting Chant, or Lightning Chant, a nine-night ceremony.

Toi Hatál, the Water Chant, nine-night ceremony.

Atósĭ Hatál, the Feather Chant, lasts nine nights, but requires so much in the way of preparation and expense that it is not popular.

Mai Hatál, the Coyote Chant, is disappearing in its entirety, but the portion of the rite for insanity is still given. It is a nine-night ceremony.

Yoi Hatál, the Bead Chant, lasts five nights.

Hochónchi Hatál, the Evil Spirit Chant, given for witchcraft, lasts but five nights, although it was originally a nine-night ceremony.

TYPICAL CHANT—As chants are sung in order to cure disease or to overcome misfortune, the person for whom a chant is to be sung decides on the one chosen. The case is carefully talked over by the family and other relatives, and astrologers and divinators are often consulted in order to select the correct ceremony. Although according to legend the medicine-man is supposed to give his services in case of need, a nominal price is asked, and sometimes he refuses to act without compensation. The charge for a minor chant consists of a sheep, horse, cow, calico, and so forth, while the expenses for a major chant with a public exhibition may be more than two hundred dollars in goods and money. The patient depends on his friends and relatives to help with expenses.

Ordinarily the chant is performed in the hoghán of the patient, but if it is too small, as in the case of the Mountain and Night chants, a special hoghán is erected before the arrival of the medicine-man. The ceremonial hoghán may be used for domestic purposes after the chant is finished. Some chants require a sweat-house, which is built of earth and brush, for sweating the patient.

The chanter should possess all the paraphernalia required for conducting a chant, such as ceremonial herbs, earths, paintings, and prayer-sticks. He is usually assisted by one or more pupils whom he has selected for their powers of memory and quickness of thought, as well as their willingness to spend years in study under his tutelage. The medicine-man is notified by a messenger who states that his services are desired, and the amount of compensation. He may refuse, but usually accepts, setting a date four days in advance.

FIG. 21—A primitive Turkish bath. Navaho men taking a sweat-bath in preparation for a healing ceremony. (Photo. by A. C. Vroman, P. G. Gates Collection, Southwest Museum)

Sometimes he sends his pouch, or *jĭsh,* containing the paraphernalia for the chant, by the messenger, but he usually carries it himself.

The ceremonies consist of a series of songs and prayers, chanted over the patient for a certain number of nights, according to the particular chant selected. Sacrifices of precious stones and prayer-sticks are essential to every ceremony. Rattles made from gourds, rawhide, and animal hoofs are used to accompany the songs, sometimes accompanied by

drums consisting of an inverted basket beaten with a drumstick of braided rawhide. For some purposes a drum is made by fastening a rawhide head over the top of an ordinary earthenware cooking-pot. Peculiar to Navaho healing ceremonies are the sand-paintings, which represent the divinity concerned in the legend of the chant or some event in the myth. There are usually four paintings to a chant, made by the assistants of the medicine-man, under his direction. The background consists of a layer of clean sand, spread on the floor of the hoghán. The colors are applied from between the thumb and index finger of the assistants, who number from one to as many as five. White is obtained from a pulverized gypsum, yellow from yellow ochre, red is pulverized red sandstone, black is charcoal from burnt scrub-oak or dry juniper, and blue consists of pulverized gypsum mixed with charcoal. After the sand-painting has been completed, the patient, who has been seated at the northwest side of the fire, seats himself in the picture, facing the east, and after the proper songs and prayers have been recited, he returns to his seat. The painting is destroyed and the sand carried from the hoghán in blankets, to be disposed of in a special place.

Masked personators of the gods appear during the ceremony, wearing masks prepared by special formulas accompanied by prescribed rituals and dedication rites. Certain of the major chants, particularly the Night Chant and some of the Mountain Chants, close with a public ceremony, although this may be dispensed with if the patient desires. For the public exhibition, a corral of brush is built, with the addition of a huge fire for the Mountain Chant, so that the Night Chant is popularly known as the Corral dance, and the Mountain Chant as the Fire dance. The Mountain Chant is accompanied by performances of magic, such as swallowing of arrows and growing of yucca plants, in the intervals of dancing by the masked personators.

Prayer offerings, known as prayer-sticks, made of short sections of reeds, filled with tobacco, feathers, and pollen, painted and deposited in shrines devoted to the god for whom they were prepared, always accompany the ceremony. If one chant does not cure the patient, a different one may be given, until he recovers—or succumbs.

POETRY AND SONGS—In addition to the sacred songs pertaining to the chants, many of which are rich in poetic beauty, the Navaho possess a wealth of secular songs, both improvised

and studied compositions. Strangely enough, these songs are sung chiefly by men, for Navaho women seldom sing. Traveling songs relate every incident of the journey, from departure to arrival; farming songs tell of the planting, growth of the corn, and joys of harvest; building songs begin with every detail of the hoghán, from the first "thinking of it" to the final dedication. There are songs of hunting, war, and gambling, as well as those describing every important event of life; and these songs are composed according to poetic rules. They are replete with figures of speech, and possess a rhythmic beauty seldom surpassed in any literature. Navaho music is characterized by strongly marked rhythm and harmonic relations of the successive tones, although to ears accustomed to European music the quality of the tone may suggest shouts or howls.

The Bluebird Song is a typical example of Navaho secular song, rich in melody and rhythm:

Just at daylight bluebird calls.
The bluebird has a voice;
He has a voice, his voice melodious,
His voice melodious that flows in gladness.
Bluebird calls. Bluebird calls.

Perhaps the most frequently quoted of all Navaho poems, a fragment from a prayer chanted in the Night Chant, addressed to the eagle, concludes with the lines:

In beauty (happily) I walk.
With beauty before me, I walk.
With beauty behind me, I walk.
With beauty below me, I walk.
With beauty above me, I walk.
With beauty all around me, I walk.
It is finished (again) in beauty,
It is finished in beauty,
It is finished in beauty,
It is finished in beauty.

MODERN NAVAHO PAINTING — For countless generations the Navaho Indians have expressed themselves by their crafts, their rituals, and their songs. Art, in the sense of painting and sculpture, is expressed only in the form of ceremonial dry-paintings, traced with colored earth according to ancient tradition, as before mentioned.

Of late years, however, a number of young Navaho artists have begun the use of a new medium, and their watercolors of Navaho life and Navaho scenes possess an unusual individuality in color and rhythm, although there is some-

times something almost Persian in combinations of design. The quality of the work of some of the young men, particularly Gerald Nailor and Tohoma, is marked by flowing lines, unusual color combinations, and delicacy of detail, forming compositions of richness and strength. Primitive as

FIG. 22—"Navaho and horses." Watercolor by Gerald Nailor, Navaho artist, an example of the best of Navaho modern art. General Charles McC. Reeve Collection, Southwest Museum (149-G-678)

these pictures may be, there is nothing crude nor inartistic about them. They are merely an indication of what these peculiarly endowed people may accomplish in the future, using the white man's tools, united with native craftsmanship and sense of beauty.

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This brief list is designed to serve as an introduction to the extended literature relating to the Navaho Indians; for "lay-readers" rather than for ethnologists, and particularly for teachers, in answer to requests for special subjects and titles. For more advanced study, consult the bibliography at the head of this list, and recent publications.

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